

JOHN LYON, NURSERYMAN AND PLANT HUNTER¹

Not a little of the pleasure that most botanists and horticulturists feel for their work derives from the richness of human association with plants. That a certain kind of plant was used medicinally 150 years ago, for example, surrounds it with an added interest.

Here is an account of the travels, business transactions, lists of plants collected and botanical and horticultural contributions of the Scotchman John Lyon during the years 1799-1814 in eastern United States.

It was Lyon presumably for whom the ericaceous genus *Lyonia* was named.

More than 50 species were introduced or re-introduced by Lyon into the nursery trade. *Pieris floribunda*, *Rhododendron calendulaceum*, *Nyssa sylvatica* and *Iris fulva*, to name but a few were initial introductions by him.

The relations of Lyon to Pursh, Nuttall and other botanists of his time are amply documented and it becomes evident that Lyon was hardly less influential in the field of botany than in horticulture.

Following an introduction and discussion under several headings the main body of the work, as might be expected from the full title, is devoted to the presentation of Lyon's journal. For several of the years there are day by day reports covering months of activity. These might become tedious except that they contain frequent information of historical interest. Often too they are relieved by footnotes of a most informative kind that, for this reviewer at least, greatly enhanced the account.

A map showing Lyon's journeys is included and a reproduction for the first time of his printed plant sales catalogue of 1812. Several indexes permit easy use as a reference work. The book is attractively bound in heavy paper.

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¹John Lyon, Nurseryman and Plant Hunter and his Journal, 1799-1814 by Joseph and Nesta Ewan. pp. 1-69, 2 figs., 3 maps, Trans. Am. Philos. Soc. vol. 53. pt. 2, Philadelphia, 1963. \$2.00.